

Message Text

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ACTION A-01

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1510

WHITE HOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 4413

DEPARTMENT FOR A,

WHITE HOUSE FOR MS. MARY HOYT, PRESS SECRETARY TO MRS. CARTER,

USIA FOR IOP, ILA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, ROSALYNN)

SUBJECT: COLOMBIAN MEDIA AND MRS. CARTER'S VISIT - ANALYSIS

1. IN GENERAL, MRS. CARTER CAN EXPECT AN ENTHUSIASTIC WELCOME FROM THE MEDIA. PRESIDENT CARTER IS POPULAR AND THE MEDIA HAVE BEEN REFLECTING AN AIR OF EXPECTATION AND CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM REGARDING THE NEW ADMINISTRATION'S POLICIES TOWARDS LATIN AMERICA. MEDIA LEADERS IN GENERAL HEARTILY WELCOMED PRESIDENT CARTER'S ELECTION VICTORY AND HAVE, WITH SOME SCATTERED RESERVATIONS, COMMENTED FAVORABLY ON HIS POLICIES ON HUMAN RIGHTS, ENERGY AND DISARMAMENT.

2. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, THEY HAVE AMPLY COMMENTED ON WHAT THEY PERCEIVE AS INADEQUATE ADMINISTRATION ATTENTION TO SPECIFICALLY LATIN AMERICAN PROBLEMS. LEADING COLUMNISTS FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARD PRESIDENT CARTER HAVE EXPRESSED DOUBTS WHETHER THE NEW ADMINISTRATION WILL TAKE LATIN AMERICA SERIOUSLY AND
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EFFECT CONCRETE IMPROVEMENTS OVER NIXON-FORD HEMISPHERIC POLICY. THAT POLICY WAS GENERALLY DESCRIBED AS ONE OF NEGLECT GLOSSED OVER WITH HIGH-BLOWN ORATORY AND HALF-HEARTED PROMISES.

3. SEVERAL OF THE NATION'S LEADING COLUMNISTS, WHILE INTELLECTUALLY ACCEPTING THE FACT THAT LATIN AMERICA SHOULD NOT BE THE OBJECT OF AN ALL-OUT DEVELOPMENT EFFORT SUCH AS THE ALLIANCE FOR

PROGRESS, TEND TO LOOK TO THE U.S. FOR A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP OVER AND ABOVE U.S. EFFORTS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THIRD WORLD THROUGH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND FORUMS. THUS MEDIA LEADERS WILL WATCH TO SEE WHETHER VISIT IS POLITICAL OR SOCIAL, SUBSTANTIVE OR COSMETIC.

4. ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN'S VISIT RECEIVED MUCH WIDER MEDIA ATTENTION THAT VISITS FROM PREVIOUS ASSISTANT SECRETARIES. THIS REFLECTS EXPECTANT ATTITUDE WHICH PREVAILS HERE. MRS. CARTER'S VISIT WILL BE SEEN AS ANOTHER AND MORE IMPORTANT STEP IN DEVELOPMENT OF ADMINISTRATION'S APPROACH TO LATIN AMERICA.

5. SOME NEGATIVE EDITORIAL COMMENT MAY BE MADE BY CONSERVATIVE DAILY EL SIGLO WHICH OF LATE HAS BEEN HYPER-CRITICAL OF SOME CARTER POLICIES. PAPER WAS BITTERLY CRITICAL OF OAS SPEECH.

6. THERE HAVE ALSO BEEN DISPARAGING COMMENTS REGARDING REPORTED NOMINATION OF "PUERTO RICAN" AS NEW U.S. AMBASSADOR TO COLOMBIA. HERNANDO SANTOS, PRINCIPAL OWNER AND ASSISTANT PUBLISHER OF PRESTIGIOUS EL TIEMPO, SAYS NOMINATION SMACKS OF PATERNALISM AND MAY INDICATE ADMINISTRATION STILL RETAINS "BANANA REPUBLIC" IMAGE OF LATIN AMERICA. MRS. CARTER MAY GET QUESTIONS ON THIS SUBJECT.

7. PRESS, RADIO AND TELEVISION REPORTERS WILL BE ANXIOUS FOR AMPLE COVERAGE, INCLUDING ADVANCE MATERIAL (STAGE-SETTERS), AND WILL HOPE FOR AT LEAST SOME OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS A FEW QUESTIONS TO MRS. CARTER. THEY WILL ACCEPT CONTROLLED SITUATION, E.G. SEVERAL QUESTIONS AFTER HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OR AFTER DEPARTURE
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STATEMENT AT AIRPORT. REPORTERS HERE TEND TO FEEL COMPLIMENTED BY ANY PERSONAL ATTENTION DIRECTED TO THEM BY HIGH-LEVEL U.S. OFFICIALS, AND SLIGHTEST SIGNS OF COURTESY AND FRIENDSHIP ARE APT TO BE REFLECTED IN WARMER COVERAGE.

8. IN GENERAL, HOWEVER, MEDIA THRUST AND COVERAGE SHOULD BE EXTREMELY POSITIVE AND MRS. CARTER WILL BE TREATED AS IMPORTANT GUEST WHOSE PRESENCE HONORS COLOMBIA.
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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